

Letters . . .

FOR THE RECORD

To the Editor—In "War Criminals—Testing the Limits of the Military Force" which appeared in your last issue (*JFQ*, Summer 97), F.M. Lorenz makes the following statement about the efforts of the Malaysian Battalion (MALBAT) in Somalia on October 3, 1993:

When U.S. Rangers were under attack . . . the Malaysian force had the only armored vehicles in Mogadishu capable of mounting a rescue effort. But they refused to engage pending approval from Kuala Lumpur, and that took more than five hours.

That assertion is not only untrue but is totally unfounded. Based on our records, the situation that evening unfolded as follows:

- On October 3, 1993, at approximately 1645 hours, UNOSOM II Headquarters requested MALBAT Headquarters to provide assistance to the U.S. Quick Reaction Force (QRF) to extricate approximately 70 U.S. Rangers and crew members of Cobra helicopters trapped in the vicinity of the Bakara Market.

- Earlier the Rangers had mounted an operation to arrest Farah Aideed near the Olympic Hotel where Aideed was meeting with his followers. The U.S. troops met with stiff resistance. In the ensuing firefight, two Cobras were shot down and a third sustained damage but managed to land safely at New Port. Subsequently, four rescue attempts by the remaining U.S. Rangers failed to break through the rebel defenses and also suffered heavy casualties.

- The first MALBAT company assembled at New Port and was ready for final orders at 1755 hours and the second company assembled at 1830 hours. They were mounted on 32 APCs. In just about two hours, the two companies under the Malaysian commander, Col Latiff, were ready to deploy and "the decision came from him and never from Kuala Lumpur."

- After further planning, the task force commander decided that the coalition force for the operation was to comprise two U.S. QRF companies mounted on MALBAT APCs, but with Malaysian drivers, gunners, signallers, vehicle commanders, and officers. There was also another company of U.S. Rangers on HUMVEEs and one troop of Pakistani tanks. The coalition force departed New Port for Bakara Market at approximately 2325 hours. The rescue operation was under the command of LTC William David, USA.

In the operation MALBAT sustained one soldier killed and six wounded as well as having two APCs destroyed. It was the combined effort by the Rangers, MALBAT, and Pakistani troops that resulted in success. It must be stressed that the whole operation from briefing to deployment and execution was done at night, which is inherently difficult and complex. Any delay was largely due to

the force having to appreciate, coordinate, and plan what was a dangerous rescue operation.

At all stages of the effort MALBAT acted spontaneously under Col Latiff and did not refer to Kuala Lumpur. Testimony by MG Thomas M. Montgomery, USA, deputy force commander of UNOSOM II, and LTC William C. David, USA, commander of 2/14th Infantry, verifies these facts.

The men and women of the Malaysian Armed Forces are a dedicated, disciplined, reliable, and courageous force. In peacekeeping missions, through diligent esprit de corps, willingness to cooperate, and self sacrifice, they have gained a reputation for trust and prowess. The "Malaysian Tigers" are respected and accepted wherever they go.

With the highest esteem for *JFQ* I request that you print this letter to correct the record.

—Col Chia Chan Sing, RMAF
Defense Attaché
Embassy of Malaysia

RESCUING THE QDR PROCESS

To the Editor—After reading your series of articles on the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) in the last issue it seems clear the Armed Forces approached the process by seeking to maintain the status quo instead of engaging in a real debate on the best force structure for the future. The review process must be rescued to make significant changes in the size and shape of the force. Unfortunately, this recent review reveals that many have forgotten that the military exists to achieve national interests, not to perpetuate service interests. Secretary Cohen appears to have been duped by this subterfuge.

A basic problem arises in the Secretary's "Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review." He indicates that "we have carefully protected the readiness of our military to carry out its currently assigned missions." Our force structure can't sustain its current operations tempo let alone maintain it with a reduced force structure. Additional force reductions will place an increased burden on an already over-tasked military, and if they are made in the wrong areas, as the QDR report proposes,

the Armed Forces will be ill prepared to exploit the revolution in military affairs.

Cohen also asserts, "The information revolution is creating a revolution in military affairs that will fundamentally change the way U.S. forces fight. We must exploit these and other technologies to dominate in battle." We need a force structure that will capitalize on technology. Yet the "Highlights of the QDR Decisions" describe a force structure that emphasizes a stratagem of maintaining large fielded forces in preparation for the force-on-force battles of the past. One must ask the Secretary, "Where are we exploiting the revolution in military affairs and how is this force structure going to fundamentally change the way U.S. forces fight?" The proposed structure tells Americans that the military is simply planning to fight future wars of attrition with large fielded ground forces.

As "The QDR Process—An Alternative View" by Jim Courter and Alvin Bernstein points out, "The Air Force will lose a whopping 27,000 active duty personnel and get only 339 new F-22s instead of 438. In addition, QDR calls for no further production of the B-2 bomber despite the findings of a deep-attack weapons mix study that additional B-2s could be decisive in halting aggression overseas." Courter and Bernstein seem surprised that force reductions should fall most heavily on the Air Force given its dominant role in the Gulf War, but they shouldn't be.

Although allied airpower was decisive in the Gulf War and prevented large numbers of casualties, the methodology (read: subterfuge) used in the QDR process had to maintain the status quo. Thus the Army keeps 10 active combat-ready divisions so the Nation can plan on having large fielded forces available for a World War II-era force-on-force battle of attrition in the 21st century. That's amazing. Courter and Bernstein are on target in stating that "airpower . . . should continue to receive the highest priority, not only for MRCs but also to discourage regional aggression by a rogue state bent on dominating its neighbors." They seem to have a better understanding of the force structure America needs than our Secretary of Defense and senior military leaders.

Possibly the National Defense Panel can cut through the word salad in the QDR report and provide an honest account to Congress on force structure. Their strategy as described in "National Security in the 21st Century: The Challenge of Transformation," offers hope. Panel members should look long and hard at the changing character of war along with other considerations and develop a force structure recommendation based on American security interests, not service interests.

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The Secretary of Defense must also take action. First, he must recognize that the services posited themselves for the largest share of the defense budget vis-à-vis the QDR process at the expense of the American taxpayer.

One need only read issues of *Military Review* from the 1950s to find arguments that are prevalent in the Army today—the only way to fight a war is with soldiers on the ground; it takes a tank to kill a tank. What if national objectives are not to hold territory but simply to influence another state? Might not seapower or airpower as employed against the attempted coup in the Philippines in 1989 be the correct option? Didn't Desert Storm prove that airpower can kill tanks? Adhering to a doctrine that emphasizes heavy tank divisions is ludicrous and misguided.

The Navy vision statement, *Force 2001, Vision, Presence, Power*, poses a service positioning itself to stay at the current level of 12 carrier battle groups through FY03 and increase the number of cruisers from 46 to 76. Is that force based on national interests or the Navy's? Imagine the savings if the Navy decreased its force structure by two, three, or four carrier battle groups. America could receive a phenomenal windfall, but is that what is best for national defense?

In the case of the Air Force, one is told it will have the ability to find, fix, and kill anything that moves on the earth's surface. Does that mean the Air Force should receive an inordinate share of the DOD budget? Although such capabilities may exist in the future, they won't be realized in the near term and are thus irrelevant for current decisions on force structure. Wouldn't national interests be better served if the Air Force engaged in a debate free of service parochialism to determine the optimum force structure? Wouldn't Air Force interests be furthered if all the services acted in the same way?

Common sense tells us that in an era of budget constraints America can't afford to fund a force structure based upon service interests. Victory on the battlefield of tomorrow will only be achieved if we rise to the challenge and work together today to place America's interests ahead of service interests.

Yet history suggests that significant changes will occur only when they are forced on the services. The current era of jointness didn't come about because our military leaders introduced a far-reaching reorganization of the defense establishment but because Congress visited the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 on the Armed Forces. The key figure in making changes should be the Secretary of Defense.

The QDR process must be conducted every four years only after a healthy debate on defense issues without any service parochialism. The Secretary

should direct the services to determine a force structure by employing the operational concepts in *JV 2010* (dominant maneuver, precision engagement, focused logistics, and full-dimension protection) as focal points of an optimum force structure. Dominant maneuver and precision engagement may mean that the Army must shed part of its structure in favor of airpower and spacepower. Focused logistics may result in the Army becoming the single DOD manager in the realm of logistics. Full-dimension protection may signal that the Navy theater-wide ballistic missile defense sea-based system is the only such system. Only after honest debate can we determine the right answers.

Recent experience suggests that change must be forced on the services—it can't be induced from inside the defense establishment. We must overcome service parochialism. The QDR process needs to be rescued or America will be the loser.

—Lt Col Andrew L. Giacomini, Jr., USAF
Instructor, U.S. Army Command
and General Staff College

EMPLOYER SUPPORT

To the Editor—John Tillson's article entitled "Improving the Management of Reserve Forces" in your last issue struck me as a particularly thorough and insightful look at the Reserve Components and their effective utilization. It is no longer a matter of using or not using the Reserves, but rather when and how. I can only think of one issue which is painfully obvious to me as a Reservist that was left unaddressed—the role of the employer, civilian or government.

The Nation is rewarded by the cost-effectiveness of available military forces. Individuals receive compensation and have their other personal needs met. But the employers of this country have to cope with unanticipated departures of Reservists. Some benefit and recognition should be provided to them. Failure to do so will only exacerbate the current problem and could significantly degrade our Reserve forces.

—LCDR Charles Schminke, USCGR
Jacksonville, Florida

THE FOG OF RMA

To the Editor—I was bemused by the letter from James Blaker in your last issue (see "Crashing Through the Barricades," *JFQ*, Summer 97) commending "debate, experimentation, and reasoned discussion" on the revolution in military affairs (RMA). It stands in stark contrast to his agenda in

Understanding the Revolution in Military Affairs: A Guide to America's 21st Century Defense (Progressive Policy Institute, January 1997) which calls for dismembering current force structure and replacing it with his notion of RMA. That proposal would result in a massive cut in our land forces (the Army by 39 percent and Marines by 28 percent), assets that in light of today's strategic environment will be needed over the next twenty to thirty years. Such an argument implies that we are beyond the point of experimentation and ready to embark on the RMA course.

The real danger in the argument advanced by Blaker and like-minded observers is an almost blind faith in what RMA is and where it is going. The problem with that dogmatic view is that the lessons of military history teach us that jumping into the future without first being grounded in the fundamental and unchanging nature of war, which also demands an understanding of history, can result in military catastrophe.

The French army and air force; the British army, Royal Navy, and Royal Air Force; the U.S. Air Corps; and the Italian army, navy, and air force jumped into the future without reference to the past with catastrophic results for both those at the sharp end of the spear and their nations. Pundits have even worse records. As we now know, Basil H. Liddell Hart, J.F.C. Fuller, Giulio Douhet, and Billy Mitchell got almost everything wrong and only extraordinary skills with the pen saved the reputations of Liddell Hart and Fuller from ruin. Militarily, only the German army and American experimenters in amphibious and carrier warfare got it partially right. This is not a really good record on which to base the huge risks that Blaker advocates.

In 1924 airmen in Britain, trumpeting the arguments of Lord Trenchard that a few strategic bombers (which, of course, wouldn't need fighter aircraft) could replace the army and Royal Navy in the defense of the United Kingdom, said that while a counterforce strategy "is the method which the lessons of military history seem to recommend . . . the Air Staff are convinced that the former [an all out attack on cities] is the correct one." Blaker has intimated that I and my fellow historians are pessimists. In this respect he is correct: history does reveal that the search for the magic bullet in the annals of military technical innovations in peacetime has more often than not led to disaster. Progress is only made when military institutions pay attention to the past and innovate in careful, measured steps based on real tests and experiments. A little history may help Blaker and his fellow zealots to innovate while remaining in touch with the world of fog, ambiguity, and friction.

—Williamson Murray
Air and Space Museum
Smithsonian Institution

CALLING OUT THE MILITIA

To the Editor—I take issue with the interpretation of Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution in “Forgotten Mission: Military Support to the Nation” by David L. Grange and Rodney L. Johnson (*JFQ*, Spring 97), specifically their use of the term *Militia*. While it is true that the Constitution provides “for calling forth the Militia to execute the laws of the Union,” I question if today the term can be applied to the Department of Defense as the authors seem to assume. Article I, Section 8, stipulates the four following points:

- To raise and support Armies
- To provide and maintain a Navy
- To make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces
- To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress.

The first two points refer to the Army and Navy; the third states that the Federal Government has the power to govern and regulate the land and naval forces, that is, the Army and Navy. It is the fourth point that gives concern. Whereas earlier the authors use the phrase “land and naval forces” when referring to the Army and Navy, here they introduce *Militia*. If they meant the forces already referred to why didn’t they refer to them in the same way? Or why did they not earlier use *Militia* instead of land and naval forces? I believe this difference is intentional and that they were referring to a third military force. Further examination of this section of the Constitution and other writing at this time sustains this position.

The framers of the Constitution gave the Federal Government power to govern and regulate the Army and Navy (“land and naval Forces”). There is no reason under the fourth point to again give the Federal Government the power “for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States.” That power was already granted—unless they meant to signify that the *Militia* differs from those forces mentioned earlier. It should also be noted that this phrase specifically refers to governing only that part “in the Service of the United States,” which implies that some other governmental body governs the rest.

The fourth quote also gives the States certain powers over the *Militia*. The first is the power to appoint the officers in the *Militia*, clearly different from the current practice in which the officers in the Armed Forces are appointed by the President. The second is the authority for training the *Militia* “according to the discipline prescribed by Congress”

which enables the Federal Government to provide a uniform set of standards for training.

This view of the *Militia* as a separate force from the Army and Navy is further substantiated by Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution which states that “The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the *Militia* of the several states, when called into the actual Service of the United States.” If the term *Militia* referred to the Army and Navy there would be no reason to separately call it out. In addition, this phrase points out that the Army and Navy are entities of the Federal Government, and the *Militia* belongs to the States.

What was the *Militia* when the Constitution was being drafted? In 1781 Thomas Jefferson wrote that the *Militia* of Virginia consisted of “Every able-bodied freeman, between the ages of 16 and 50.” He also noted that “The law requires every militia-man to provide himself with the arms usual in the regular service.” Further amplification of what was meant by the fourth point is found in *Federalist Paper No. 29* by Alexander Hamilton that cites the same section of the Constitution as in the fourth point above. Hamilton then argued that the reason for the *Militia* is to reduce the necessity of maintaining a large standing army. He further stated that the *Militia* consists of the people at large and underscored that “it will be possible to have an excellent body of well-trained militia ready to take the field whenever the defense of the State shall require it. This will not only lessen the call for military establishments, but if circumstances should at any time oblige the government to form an army of any magnitude that army can never be formidable to the liberties of the people while there is a large body of citizens, little if at all inferior to them in discipline and the use of arms.” James Madison, in *Federalist Paper No. 45*, wrote that the *Militia* is clearly so much larger than any military force within the realm of possibility that the advantage is clearly with the States.

On control of the *Militia*, Hamilton asserted in *Federalist Paper No. 29* that “the particular States are to have the sole and exclusive appointment of the officers,” thereby reiterating Article I, Section 8, which reserves “to the States respectively the Appointment of the Officers.”

Thus the *Militia* as referred to in the Constitution is not the Army or Navy or any other part of DOD—despite current opinion to the contrary. It should also be pointed out that in the article by Grange and Johnson the quote of Article IV, Section 4 of the Constitution omits a key part of the phrase which changes the meaning of the quote. This excluded section states “and on Application of the

Legislature, or the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic violence.” A reading of the full article makes it clear that the word “legislature” refers to the state, not the Federal, legislature which is consistently referred to as Congress. Therefore the Federal Government cannot send in military support until the State has requested it.

A footnote: Grange and Johnson cite the Shays Debtor Rebellion in 1786 as an example of the “role of the Armed Forces in crises,” thus implying that Federal forces suppressed the rebels. In January 1784 the American military establishment consisted of one regiment of 527 infantrymen and one battery with 183 artillerymen. In June 1784 under the Articles of Confederation Congress disbanded the Army because it was “inconsistent with the principles of republican government” in time of peace. All that remained were 80 artillerymen guarding stores at West Point, New York, and Fort Pitt, Pennsylvania. Until 1789 the Army had no infantry forces. In August 1786 Captain Daniel Shays, a veteran of the Revolutionary War, led a mob of farmers against the courthouse at Northampton, Massachusetts, to protest that former soldiers who could not pay their debts were having farms forfeited and were being sentenced to prison or condemned to involuntary servitude. In January 1787 Shays led some 1,200 rebels to Springfield where they confronted 600 militiamen defending a local arsenal. The *Militia*, having the advantage of artillery, routed the Shaysites who were pursued by a newly arrived force of Massachusetts *Militia* who crushed the rebellion in late February. On September 17, 1787, the Constitution was signed and on August 7, 1789 the War Department was created. The Army was formed on September 29, 1789 and consisted of 846 men.

—CDR James M. Winterroth, USNR
Carson, California

POLITICAL OBJECTIVES

To the Editor—“Keeping the Strategic Flame” by Carl Builder (*JFQ*, Winter 96–97) should be mandatory reading for every leader or soldier who must operate in the strategic arena. The future viability of the Armed Forces lies in understanding the political context of everything in which they become involved. All military activities, even training exercises, have political purposes that are, or should be, their primary purposes. If this is clearly understood, the Armed Forces will be able to significantly increase U.S. influence—whether that means causing someone to do something or not to do something. This is another way of formulating the familiar Clausewitzian adage that war is a continuation of politics by other means. Adopting this way of thinking will also rekindle the strategic flame that

Builder says is almost out or is at least in hiding among the American military.

Understanding the criticality of political ends (Builder's strategic interests) is vital for both soldiers and politicians. The latter must understand the need for explicit political guidance for the three days of war—the day before, the day of, and the day after. If this occurs, and the military responds quickly and appropriately, war will be deterred or fought for the desired outcome. Either outcome can be considered a victory since the conflict will terminate when political goals have been achieved. (As Builder properly indicates, this is not necessarily destruction of an enemy: "military power can sometimes be brought to bear when it is applied without first defeating defending enemy forces." Sun Tzu's notion that it is better to defeat an enemy's strategy than its army is one clear example of this point.)

Politically savvy officers are needed to help politicians develop clear political objectives that can be translated into military objectives. These political military operatives should be trained and attuned to function at the intersection of the political and

military—that gray area where the strategist is important. The Army used to have a program for this purpose—the Army Strategist's Program. Unfortunately, it has languished. Bernard Brodie, a noted strategist of the nuclear era, argued that strategy was too important to be left to military professionals. He said "we need people who will challenge, investigate, and dissect the prevailing dogmas" of foreign and defense policy. Students of strategy must know the "inevitable limitations and imperfections of scientific method in strategic analysis and decisionmaking," particularly shortcomings of practitioners "whose greatest limitation is that they sometimes fail to observe true scientific discipline."

It must be understood that the "most basic issues of strategy often do not lend themselves to scientific analysis . . . because they are laden with value judgments and therefore tend to escape any kind of disciplined thought"; and last but not least, the Clausewitzian admonition on the "need to stress the superior importance of the political side of strategy to the simply technical and technological

side" is particularly relevant to nuclear deterrence in the post-Cold War period.

Builder gets to the heart of this dilemma: "The burden of strategic thinkers is to explore beforehand what may be worth doing and why." The military should break out of its fixation on planning, programming, and budgeting and its computer-oriented mindset and develop a feel for the political by doing just what Brodie advised. Failure to do so begs for a repeat of the problems encountered in Vietnam and Somalia. Revitalizing and rekindling the strategic flame could start at the war colleges with the formation of a specialized strategist's track. This would provide skilled practitioners of strategy as espoused by Brodie. In time, they could be the mentors of a generation of strategists. Such efforts are necessary to answer Builder's call to rekindle the strategic flame.

—COL Bruce B.G. Clarke, USA (Ret.)
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